



Audio for this story from *All Things Considered* will be available at approx. 7:00 p.m. ET

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According to the study, bluefin tuna like these are among the most overfished creatures in the ocean.  
Chris Park/AP

China is also overfishing in the high seas, though the data about that are sketchier.

#### A Realistic Look At The Issue

Steve Murawski, chief scientist at the National Marine Fisheries Service, says this new research is a more realistic look at the issue, compared with the original study. It shows that fisheries aren't in fact doomed to extinction.

"In the majority of cases, in fact virtually all the cases where fishery rates have been cut substantially, we've seen a positive response," Murawski says. "And that is a pivotal result of this paper. It basically says that fishery management works."

The issue is getting over what can be a painful transition from overfishing to a lower, but sustainable rate of fishing. That often means short-term pain as fishing boats and fishermen are forced into retirement.

"It's up to us. If we want sustainable fisheries, we can achieve them," Murawski says.

And as the new research makes clear, that's a question of political will, not a lack of scientific knowledge.

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